

## CA-MPO Joint Policy Board with SAW-MPO

Notes: October 1, 2019

DRAFT

### **Call to Order:**

Ann Mallek and Jim Harrington called the joint CA-MPO/SAW-MPO meeting to order at 1:14 p.m. and asked attendees to introduce themselves.

### **Matters from the Public:**

None

### **Opening Remarks/Framing of the Meeting**

Mr. Boyles gave a brief history of the joint meeting between the CA-MPO and the SAW-MPO. He said with less than 12 miles between the borders of the two MPOs, it was decided that it would be best to communicate and coordinate.

Ms. Riesel del stated that the CA-MPO and the SAW-MPO are the only MPOs that meet on a regular basis in Virginia. She said it was important to do so because they both share resources and citizens (as commuters).

### **Presentations**

#### **Afton Express Service Plan**

Nancy Gorley, CSPDC Transit Manager, gave background on the Afton Express for those who are new to the information. There has been a feasibility study done on the service and the study revealed that there is great interest in it. It was recommended that the service be implemented in phases with stops in Staunton, Waynesboro and Charlottesville. A plan was put together and submitted in a grant application to the state. The grant required a local match and because the timing of the grant did not match some of the localities' budget cycle, the grant was not awarded. DRPT saw the value in the service and have contracted with Kimley Horn to study how to move forward. She introduced Ben Chambers, Transportation Planner from Kimley Horn.

Mr. Chambers gave an overview of the study done. He discussed how the Virginia Breeze program might interact with the Afton Express, grants available, community support for the service and where the stops should be positioned. He reported that the DRPT is currently putting forth analysis efforts on identifying transit needs.

#### **DRPT Inter-City Bus Expansion and Other Initiatives**

Grant Sparks, DRPT Manager of Transit Planning and Corridor Development, reported on the Virginia Breeze, the state-funded intercity bus service and its goals for the next year. Its main goal is to provide service to under-served areas and populations to connect them from Blacksburg up the I-81 corridor to Staunton and then on to Dulles and Union Station.

Mr. Sparks reported that there was a study commissioned last year to see if there were any unmet needs for intercity bus travel. Ultimately, there were two new routes chosen which will be rolled

out next spring and summer. One originates in South Central Virginia and another comes through the 29 corridor. The Virginia Breeze is the overarching name of the service and the routes are as follows: the I-81 corridor is the Valley Flyer, the 29 corridor is the Piedmont Connector and the Martinsville to Richmond route is the Capitol Express.

He reported on next steps, including procuring a transportation provider, new branding, creating a new mobile app and ticketing synchronization, final stop selection and, finally, tentatively launching the service in Spring/Summer of 2020.

For additional information, go to [www.virginiabreeze.org](http://www.virginiabreeze.org).

#### Crozet Tunnel Progress Update

Allen Hale, President of the Crozet Tunnel Foundation, gave a history of the Crozet tunnel from its inception in the 1850's to when services ended in 1944. It lies 700 feet below Rockfish Gap and the tunnel (and trails on both sides) was sold to Nelson County for \$1 in 2007 from CSX.

He noted that the current tunnel project is an example of what can be done with localities work together. If anyone would like additional information about the project, please visit [www.BlueRidgeTunnel.org](http://www.BlueRidgeTunnel.org). If you would like to become a founding member, please visit <http://blueridgetunnel.org/support-donate/>

#### Perrone Robotics

Mike Raschid, Chief Legal Office and VP of Operations of Perrone Robotics, gave an overview of what Perrone Robotics does and what they are doing with the county. Perrone Robotics is focused on the autonomous transit of people and goods in defined zones such as business districts, airports, neighborhoods, etc. They use the application of their technology in existing transit vehicles.

He invited attendees to take a trip in their autonomous vehicle after the meeting and to take a tour of their facility, located in Crozet.

#### **Next Meeting in Fall 2020**

Ms. Mallek adjourned the meeting at 2:43 p.m.